

# Lantana biocontrol

## *Aconophora compressa*



# ACONOPHORA COMPRESSA

*Aconophora compressa*, a stem-sucking bug, has a limited distribution, preferring dry, cool areas.

## ORIGIN

- *A. compressa* occurs naturally from Mexico to Columbia.
- Laboratory cultures of *A. compressa* originate from Mexico and Guatemala.
- The insect was first released in Australia in 1995.

## BIOLOGY

- Adults and nymphs suck the sap of woody stems.
- Eggs are laid along woody stems.
- Females show maternal behaviour, tending the nymphs until they reach adulthood.
- Development time from egg to adult is about 40 days.
- Adults live for about six months.

## AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTION AND IMPACT ON LANTANA

- *A. compressa* is found in north Queensland, Brisbane and central New South Wales.
- In Queensland, the bug prefers open, cooler, drier conditions, while in New South Wales, it prefers semi-shaded areas.
- Populations of *A. compressa* build up in winter, subsiding during summer when temperatures are high.
- The bug can cause branches to die back, causing plants to become stunted and produce fewer flowers and seeds.
- *A. compressa* is found on several flowering varieties of *Lantana camara* and has damaged some non-target species. For a full list of species refer to *NRM fact PA27 'Aconophora on fiddlewood trees'*. ([www.nrm.qld.gov.au/pests/aconophora.html](http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au/pests/aconophora.html))

